

Dear Sirs:

In re: Joshua Lederberg American Scientist
59, March-April 1971. First let me praise a
fine issue of American Scientist! I particu-
larly liked Dr. McGeer's "The Chemistry of
the Mind."

Why haven't you followed Dr. L's partisan
pamphlet with a marshaling of facts from one
or more concerned citizens of the USA. You
seem not to be aware that a president of a
100,000 + member society characterizes Dr. L
as "having a hang up on BW."

Dr. Lederberg unwittingly delivers the most
telling argument in favor of BW munitions in
the arsenal of one's favored country. BW
strikes terror in the hearts of even sophis-
ticated people. Scared foes are as immobil-
ized as if they were animals staring into a
laser beam; if they flee from a battlefield
before many of them are infected then they
will have lost in a humane war, won't they?

Who would (and has) advised our president
to be prepared to surrender to an enemy
without first trying to rout him with the
threat of a man-made epidemic?

Dr. Lederberg suggests several impractical

BW munitions (black death, rabies, yellow fever) as a way of setting up a straw man of uncontrolled contagion. Yet he suggests that yellow fever without an insect vector would be useful in a one shot aerial dissemination. In winter mosquitos are not around. In ~~sunny~~, humid South Asia, aerosols of yellow fever would have a short 1/2 life.

In December 1969 The Washington Post editorialized, "We need a disinterested person to advise us on BW."

Can't American Scientist give honorable employment to one or more scientists who through the years of Fort Detrick, have endeavoured to endow their country with a bonus for survival in an unfriendly world--by commissioning an informed article on BW?

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